MESSAGE TO THE BLACK MOVEMENT

A Political Statement From The Black Underground

Coordinating Committee
Black Liberation Army
CC-BLA

UNITY
FREEDOM
STRUGGLE
BLA
BLACK LIBERATION ARMY

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Arm The Spirit ★ Solidarity

Dedicated to all the comrades killed,
captured, and exiled in the struggle to
build the armed urban guerrilla front,
and to those who supported us when all
others refused to face up to reality...

The season of struggle is our season.

Message To The Black Movement
this edition published Febuary 2002
by Arm The Spirit-Solidarity in Montreal, Canada

ISBN 1-894820-22-3

Publishers:

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web: www.kersplebedeb.com

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Introduction

The following is a political overview and statement of general political positions. We have written these positions from the perspective of the Armed Front because we feel that such a perspective is needed in the total revolutionary process for black liberation. We are general in our public statement because we are essentially a military and political front, therefore it would not do to speak in any other terms, for the actions of the armed front will address themselves to the specifics of our people's national oppression. We do not wish the enemy to gain tactical insight in carrying out his repressive campaigns, while on the other hand we do desire that the Black Liberation Movement understand the correct role armed struggle plays in a people's struggle and how this role is in motion for us here in North America.

The tool of analysis is for us a further development of the Historical Materialist method, the dialectical method. We will not even waste our time debating the values of Marxism with those who are emotionally hung up on white people - hung up to the point of ideological blindness. We understand the process of revolution, and fundamental to this understanding is this fact: Marxism is developed to a higher level when it is scientifically adapted to a people's unique national condition, becoming a new ideology altogether. Thus was the case in China, Guinea-Bissau, Vietnam, North Korea, the Peoples Republic of the Congo and many other socialist nations. For Black people here in North America our struggle is not only unique, but it is the most sophisticated and advanced oppression of a racial national minority in the whole world. We are the true 20th century slaves, and the use of the dialectical method, class struggle and national liberation, will find its highest development as a result of us. This dialectic holds true not only for Marxism, but for revolutionary nationalism as well; it holds true for concepts of revolutionary Pan-Africanism; it is true of the theoretical basis in developing revolutionary black culture. All of these ideological trends will find their highest expression as a result of our advanced oppression.

Yet, we must be ever mindful that the same objective process is true for reactionary refinement as a result of our struggle. This is the unity of opposites in struggle with each other. To defeat our enemy and render his reactionary allies impotent, we must have a truly revolutionary perspective informed by concepts of revolutionary class struggle, a movement without such a perspective will fail to defeat our common oppressor. We are not afraid of white people controlling our movement, for our formations, guns, and ideas are built with our own hands, efforts, and blood. With this in mind, we address ourselves to the Black Liberation struggle, its activist elements and organizations. Our call is for **Unity**, for a **National Black Liberation Front**. We must build to win!

Nyurba,
Black Liberation Army

An Overview

We will start with the basic fact that Capitalism and Imperialism as an economic system is in a deep crisis at home and abroad. The basis of this crisis is, of course, the exploitive relationships that capital must maintain in order to function. It is these economic, social and political relationships that signal the eventual doom of our oppressors and this system of oppression under which we all live.

This crisis of capitalism is of a protracted nature. By this we mean it is a long process of deterioration that is spread over a considerable length of time. The seeming material wealth which we see all around us in no way contradicts this fact of decay, deterioration, or the fact of crisis. In fact, over-production and uneven distribution have led time and time again to a bloated market, cutbacks in employment, and all the attendant ills of an economy based on private ownership of socially produced commodities. Inflation, soaring prices, and inadequate wages are all symptoms of an economy that is based primarily on class exploitation at home and national domination of the Third World's resources abroad.

The heightening of oppressed peoples struggles abroad have added to the crisis of the entire western world, and threaten to cut drastically its essential resources. We realize that the chief economic and military power in the western world and its ruling class, namely the United States of North America and its corporate-financial ruling circles, will never allow the demise of its empire without a desperate fight. We, as Blacks in North America, must realize that to seek inclusion into the prevailing socio-economic system is suicide in the long run, for the prevailing system cannot withstand the irresistible world trend of history which is opposed to continued U.S. exploitation, racist domination and subjugation. To fool ourselves into believing that "equal opportunity", "justice", and social equality is the same as the capitalist system is a grave mistake with genocidal implications for every person of color. Our first obligation is to ourselves, this means our first obligation is to secure our total liberation from those forces that maintain our oppressive condition. Related to this self-obligation (not distinct from it), is our obligation to all oppressed peoples throughout the world, for in striving to liberate ourselves we must abolish a system that enslaves others throughout the world. This, in essence, is our historical duty, we can either carry it out or betray it - but we most certainly will be judged accordingly by the world's peoples.

The BLA, as a result of realizing the economical nature of the system under which we are forced to live, maintains the following principles:

1. That we are anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist, anti-racist, and anti-sexist.

2. That we must of necessity strive for the abolishment of these systems and for the institution of Socialistic relationships in which black people have total and absolute control over their own destiny as a people.

3. That in order to abolish our system of oppression, we must utilize the science of class struggle, develop this science as it relates to our unique national condition.

View From The Armed Front: The Dialectic Of Revolutionary Violence, Law And Reformism

Our recognition of the economic contradictions of capital in no way obscures the social and political realities that now confront us and our struggle for Black Liberation. To the contrary, it enhances and deepens our perspective and clarifies the dialectical role of armed struggle in our liberation process.

We have begun to recognize and analyze those forces in a modern technologically advanced society that set our particular struggle apart from other Third World people's struggles, as well as the common factors all oppressed peoples share as a result of U.S. and western imperialism. One such factor that sets our struggle apart from other struggles is the profound influence of organized technology on our consciousness, social relationships, and behaviour. People who live in the technologically advanced societies of the west have been programmed to perceive their needs as being one in the same as the technology that created these artificial needs. Because the masses of working people do not control this technology, it has been consistently used to manipulate their whole lives. We are told what to buy, what to eat, whom to hate, and what to love, by rulers and controllers of an exploitive system.

Technology in the context of capitalism is the ultimate means by which the masses are programmed out of the need for real freedom. A whole social value system has evolved to support the dependence on corporate-state technological control. We no longer know what freedom is - what self-determination is. We perceive the value of competition as being in the natural order of human relationships, instead of contrary to the fact that people are social animals, more attuned to cooperation than competition. We must create in the course of destroying our system of oppression, whole new value concepts, concepts that exist in dialectical opposition to the values that buttress our oppression - even more than this, we must create a new need within ourselves for freedom, so that we can harness technology on our behalf. As it stands now, Black people cannot even conceive of real freedom; we are afraid of real liberation because we have been programmed to be afraid by racist class oppression. Technology has immensely aided in reinforcing our fear of the dominant ruling circles. We must break this social psychosis.

The BLA has undertaken armed struggle as a means by which the social psychosis of fear, awe, and love of everything white people define as being of value, is purged from our peoples' minds. Our historical experience in North America has shown us that we as a people have always suffered while the racist ruling circles have never suffered. We have seen throughout our history pain, blood, rape, exploitation, poverty, our families torn asunder by a cruel and brutal culture, our youth murdered and socially crippled, our women degraded, our lives ever at the mercy of the cold American dream machine. We realize that the results of this historical experience has caused black people to fear America's capacity for racist violence, and on the other hand, has reinforced the racist ruling circles in their attitudes of arrogance and confidence. The fact that the majority of whites who are equally oppressed and exploited do not really understand who their real enemy is, does not deter us from doing what must be done to break not only our people's mental chains, but theirs as well. We therefore, will illustrate in the only terms that the ruling classes understand - the terms of blood - their blood. America must learn that Black people are not the eternal sufferers, the universal prisoners, the only ones who can feel pain. Revolutionary violence is, therefore, not a tactic of struggle, but a strategy. A strategy designed to drive the capitalist system further into crisis, while at the same time forcing all those responsible for oppression to realize that they too can bleed, they too can feel our pain. Only when this is realized, will any just and equal decisions be made, will we be conceded our right to self-determination. As it stands now, the powerful do not believe they can hurt and therefore, find concession to our demands for liberation ridiculous. Our social/psychotic fear of the racists ruling circles must be purged also, and only by developing our capacity to fight our enemy will this unreasonable and reactionary fear be eradicated from our social psyche. Revolutionary violence is not so much a self-cleansing process as it is a necessary ingredient in creating a psychological frame of mind amongst the ruling classes that our liberation must be granted.

We must clarify revolutionary violence in relationship to our actual condition, because many of our people believe in the "law", or at least the existing code of law of our oppressor. Most people do not see the real relationship between the development of western law and the development of western capitalism; therefore, these people cannot deal with the reality of injustice as being an integral part of the prevailing system. Not a few people misunderstand the objective class function of the courts, the police, and various related institutions in maintaining the illusion of North American democracy.

In a society such as exists here today, law is never impartial, never divorced from the economic relationships that brought it about. History clearly shows that in the course of the development of modern western society, the code of law is the code of the dominant and most powerful class, made into laws for everyone. It is implemented by establishing "special" armed organs, that are obliged to enforce the prevailing class laws. In this historical period of human social development such is the objective function of "law", under such conditions of the most powerful economic and political classes. But, what about the law in a democracy, especially one that claims that all its citizens can elect their representatives who in turn can create new laws? First of all, such a democracy does not exist in North America, bourgeois democracy is essentially the dictatorship of what used to be termed the "national bourgeoisie". There are a combination of reasons as to why this form of democracy as such is merely a means of political control that evinces a design to subjugate its people, all of these reasons flow from the necessity to maintain exploitive capitalist relationships. Thus, the influence of corporate wealth on the politics of bourgeois democracy is merely an extension of private property's traditional influence and control of the so-called democratic process. The constant co-optation by ruling classes of the masses of working peoples, coupled with their complete control of technology and information, renders the so-called democratic process null and void. To a greater degree all social and political institutions in a class society are reflections of the class organization of that society and the reflection of a given technological-economic arrangement and its supporting value system. The political organization of the most powerful classes or economic groups in a class society has to be, and is, the control by these classes over the entire society and its political system. We have found the democratic process under capitalism to be merely a means by which capital controls the masses. It is a means of mass diversion, designed to keep the powerless classes politically impotent while at the same time fostering the illusion that real power can be gained through the electoral process. Black people should know better. In a nation based on the false principle of majority rule, we are a marginal minority and therefore our right to self-determination cannot be won in the arena of our oppressor.

The rejection of reformism however, is much deeper than the above reasons. For if reformism is a rejection of any meaningful change, it is also a rejection of revolutionary violence, and therefore reformism is a functional ignorance of the dynamics of black liberation. This is because the character of reformism is based on unprincipled class collaboration with our enemy. The ideals of class collaboration do not stand in opposition to our people's oppression, but instead consistently seeks to reform the oppressive system. Reform of the oppressive system can never benefit its victims, in the final analysis the system of oppression was created to insure the rule of particular racist classes and sanctify their capital. To seek reform therefore inevitably leads to, or begins with, the recognition of the laws of our oppressor as being valid.

Those within the movement who condemn the revolutionary violence of anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist, and revolutionary Black Nationalist groups are in essence weakening themselves. These fools do not understand the interactive need for revolutionary violence with other forms of struggle, and because they do not understand the real dynamics involved they seriously inhibit the development of the liberation movement as a whole. These reformists in liberationist garb should understand that unless the movement cultivates its capacity to fight the enemy on all fronts, no front will secure any real victories. It is abysmal ignorance that imagines our oppression in any other terms than undeclared war.

How will the movement as a whole be able to fight the oppressor in the future when all other "legal" methods are completely exhausted? How will we implement political struggle without the machinery and capacity for revolutionary violence - when it is abundantly clear that our oppressor maintains armed organs of violence for the enforcement of his rule? We as a movement will be unable to fight in the future if we do not develop the capacity for revolutionary violence in the present. But revolutionary violence is not an alternative to mass movement and organization, it is complementary to a mass struggle, it is another front in the total liberation process. Those who put the question of revolutionary violence in "alternative" terms are guilty of crippled politics at best, or reactionary politics at worst. Those involved in the total revolutionary process, yet claim not to "endorse" revolutionary violence when it occurs, are attempting to "legitimize" their existence at the expense of the entire struggle. The only "legitimacy" these people can possibly be seeking in such cases is bourgeois legitimacy. These type of people further confuse the masses, for revolutionary violence is not clarified and extended in order to undermine the psychological dependence Black people still have on racist reactionary "legality". This is the vilest of sins, one for which everyone will pay during heightened repression.

We therefore do not view the "law" of our class enemies as valid, nor do we feel restricted in struggle to his laws. On the other hand, we understand the "tactical" value of using the law and consequently we understand the tactical value of reform in the liberation process. For example, school takeovers by community parents, rent strikes by tenants, labor union takeovers by dissident members, etc., utilizing their systems and built-in safeguards to obtain certain goals that place the enemy at a temporary disadvantage. But we maintain there is only tactical value to reform when there exists other forms of revolutionary struggle against the whole of the capitalist structure. Reform as such is inherently reactionary and perpetuates psychological dependence on the enemy, while confusing the true class contradictions between ourselves and the enemy. Considering these factors, we maintain that reform can never be anything more than a tactic, never a complete strategy, never offering in itself any revolutionary change. While it may offer the black bourgeoisie rewards, it can never be the road to self-determination for the entire black populace.

We also strongly condemn those who claim to be progressive, yet depreciate revolutionary violence of an oppressed people in their struggle for liberation. There can be no conditions on our fight for freedom except those set by the oppressed themselves. Those who claim that revolutionary violence gives the enemy the opportunity to repress the movement in general are profoundly mistaken if they think the reactionary government needs such excuses for repression, or that the government does not recognize the real danger in allowing a movement to develop the full-blown capacity to wage armed struggle. The BLA has undertaken the task of building just such a capacity, along with other comrades on the clandestine level.

Why Build The Armed Front

We have chosen to build the armed front, the urban guerrilla front, not as an alternative to organizing masses of black people, but because the liberation movement as a whole must prepare armed formations at each stage in its struggle. A failure to build these armed formations can be fatal to both the struggle and Black people.

Our ultimate or strategic goal at this point in creating the apparatus of revolutionary violence is to weaken the enemy capitalist state, creating at the same time objective-subjective conditions that are ripe for the formation of a National Black Liberation Front composed of many progressive, revolutionary, and nationalist groupings, and in this same process create the nucleus of the armed clandestine organs which such a front would need in order to carry out its political tasks. These are the broad reasons for our devotion to armed struggle. The fact that no such national united front exists now, in no way precludes the fact that the creation of one will become necessary in the future (as the contradictions of capitalist society increase repression, racism and social deterioration). We are of the opinion that subjective conditions are not ripe for such unity.

Because of objective conditions, namely, enemy activity and the relative low degree of unity within the black struggle, we have decided to build the apparatus separate and distinct (organizationally) from all other mass type groups. This is a tactical necessity, but this tactical necessity does not contradict our strategic call for all groups in the black liberation movement to form a national united front, with the principle of armed action as one of many "legitimate" forms of political policy.

At present the contradictions that any BLA activities may cause are not to be avoided. Every progressive should welcome the exposure and development of contradictions, for it is through the development of contradictions, for it is through the development of contradictions that we will all move forward. Every brother, every sister on the side of liberation should and must support the struggle on all fronts, and clarify to our people the acts of revolutionary violence committed against our common oppressors and class enemies of all colors. This means that revolutionary violence must be supported by those in the movement on all levels. While such support will be difficult at first, objective conditions and time will remove much of this difficulty which is primarily ideological myopia to begin with. We know from experience that because of the class nature of our struggle and its racist aspect, many of our actions may very well be tactical actions of a purely military-psychological nature, and because of this clear political support may seem quite difficult. Nonetheless we intend to clarify all acts of revolutionary violence and accept responsibility for these acts. The important factor, however, is that the progressive movement, the liberation movement, and comrades on all levels of struggle understand that failure to support the armed urban guerrilla front (militarily, politically) is a failure to support the mass front, is a failure to support the "legal" thrusts of our struggle in "civil rights", and in the final analysis, an abdication of responsibility. Cowardice can be understood, but not opportunism and an abdication of commitment to our total liberation.

Racism And Class

Our recognition of the class nature of our struggle has led us to certain objective conclusions which have been borne out by actual conditions. We have for some time now observed how the influence of certain class values determine how one acts or reacts in society. We have observed the class differences among the majority white population in the United States, and the reflection of these differences among Black people. As we have said years before this, the class differences among Black people are differences in consciousness, attitudes, and behaviour, but unlike these same class differences among whites, economic status or economic position is not the major determinant. The overwhelming majority of Blacks (with the exception of very few) are essentially in the same economic class, and suffer essentially the same relationship to the productive forces of capital.

Despite this fact however, the differences in consciousness and in attitudes are real, and therefore must be dealt with as if these attitudes were economic class distinctions. The reality of our people tells us that not only are there Black enemies of Black people, but that these Black enemies are first and foremost class enemies of our struggle for liberation. It is their class values, ideas, and class ideals that make them what they are, coupled with the fact that they are Black, or of a so-called "sub-culture" When this factor of culture is considered in proper perspective, we find that these enemies in Black face can hide among us, spreading their various reactionary liberal philosophies of gradualism, Black capitalism, "integration", cultural nationalism, reformism, etc.

The reason why these Black class enemies find acceptance are many. The first and foremost reason is our unique social psychology, or our emotional response to racism. This reflex has primed us to think in terms of color first (just as it programmed whites to view color as a determinant factor), and when such thinking becomes culturally typical of us, we are vulnerable to class infiltration by Black enemies of our struggle. We tend to blame the color and not the class values of our oppressor when we are betrayed or exploited by one of our own people. Thus when a Black person betrays or hurts us we say, "niggahs ain't shit!" (this also indicates self-hatred and/or self-pity); instead, what we should say is that "certain classes of niggahs ain't shit!"

Why should we have such a class perspective, and maintain class vigilance for ruling class lackeys? The first reason is that in a class society such as the one that we suffer under, every brand of thought, every form of behaviour, are stamped with the mark of a particular class. This has deep meaning for us, for the dominant classes in this country are white and their culture racist. We as Blacks reflect in our thinking the values, and ideas of these dominant classes, as well as the defensive response to their social-cultural racism manifested in their system of rule. For these reasons we are vulnerable, we can easily be misled, abused and misused. We become easy targets for the racist ploys of our collective enemy. The enemy can use skin color to confuse us into thinking that if we attack another Black we are necessarily attacking ourselves, when it may very well be the other way around - we are attacking him! It is to our advantage to have a clear principled class view. It is to the oppressors disadvantage if we are principled class-conscious individuals, opposed to unprincipled class collaboration.

If we look at most of the organizations on the scene today, and their philosophies, leadership, and methods of struggle, we will see the reflection of certain class ideals, ideas and values. Overwhelmingly these groups each reflect the goals of a particular class of Black folks. Without a revolutionary class perspective, we who are striving to acquire total emancipation from the forces which enslave the whole of our people, will be unable to distinguish true friends from true enemies, those who are confused from those who are conscious tools of the oppressor, and we will not be able to win potential allies.

This brings us to the dialectical role of culture, for if we understand that as members of a class society (or victims) we all are influenced by the class perspectives of that society, and for Black people this means the values, standards, etc., of the dominant racist classes, then we must understand the tool by which we are programmed into these perspectives of class. Culture is the tool. We view culture as the means by which a dominant class programs the whole of society into that classes' ideals, values, and standards, thereby perpetuating its dominance.

This objective class function of culture should not lead us to the incorrect conclusion that if we adopt a "cultural" orientation in our fight for liberation that such would be sufficient. This is the essential view of the cultural nationalists who orient all around culture - such a view is incorrect. For it does not deal with the economic, class, and psychological basis of the struggle between two opposing cultural entities. The dominant reactionary culture must be destroyed before any revolutionary culture can truly manifest itself. In other words, it is in the active struggle of the two that the seeds of a revolutionary culture are laid. Not in the passive creation of an alternative "culture". Such could only be an alternative life style, allowed to exist at the will of the dominant capitalist culture. In this sense cultural nationalism is bourgeois nationalism because it does not propose the abolishment of the capitalist system and culture.

In dealing with the objective function of culture then, we understand its social role in maintaining certain class relationships. A racist culture does this and more. A racist culture programs not only the members of the dominant racial group into class ideals, standards, and values, but it also psychologically creates the necessary racist attitudes needed to maintain these class perspectives as a whole, against the targets of that racism. Thus the feelings of superiority, fear of Blacks, and hostility toward the strivings of Black people (and all Third World peoples in general) is deeply ingrained into the white psyche along with the class phobias and standards. Even more than this, the victims of the racist culture are programmed into feelings of self-hatred, inferiority, and impotency. Very often this creates a mental social state that views the prevailing system as eternal and everlasting. Coupled with the class values of the dominant culture, Black folks are constantly torn between wanting what the oppressor defines as desirable, and the inability to get it. Or, to get it and then realize that it was only a hoax, he is still as Black as ever. All of this is crippling for the oppressed Black person, for it ties their brains irrevocably to their oppressors for salvation, often leading to the clownish pursuit of all that is defined as "good" by the standards of the oppressor.

In order to break these psychological-class chains of 20th century enslavement, we must build a revolutionary culture. A culture that not only programs our minds out of oppression, but at the same time impels us against the enemy classes and culture. The BLA contribution in building such a culture will be to strive to create an armed tradition of resistance to our oppression, and to create a socio-psychological frame of mind on both oppressed and oppressor alike, that will lead to our eventual self-determination as a people.

We therefore make few distinctions based on the color of our enemies. The same treatment will be meted out to white ruling class enemies and their lackeys as will be meted out to Black bootlickers and Black class enemies of our struggle. Our only consideration is that our armed formations and leadership are of our own people.

Destructive Sub-Culture, Crime And Prison

The Black communities of the United States are the tragic results of class/race subjugation, an oppressive situation created and exploited by the rich white capitalist class of this corrupt country, and systematically perpetuated and reinforced through their various institutions. The wretched conditions that are inherent within these ghettos continue to exist not because there are no means of erasing them, but rather because they have proven profitable to the class that created them.

The ruling class of the racist descendants of the chattel slaveholders. They have amassed a vast portion of the world's wealth through their rapacious practice of profiting off the misery and discomfort of humanity in general, and Third World people in particular. They use this enormous concentration of wealth to buy, bribe, steal, influence, murder, enslave, blackmail, control, and repress any nation, organization, group or individual that would speak out against, or offer any serious opposition to their self-imposed right to power.

In order to maintain the present mis-arrangement, the social imbalances, the bourgeois class continues to use repressive tactics in various forms. The effects of this repression becomes clearly evident upon examination of the destructive sub-culture (the Black community) born out of American politics.

This sub-culture materialized out of the need of Black folks for security and a sense of belonging that had been denied them since their arrival in this country; an attempt by the rejected and dispossessed - a totally de-culturalized people - to integrate bourgeois society by imitating the life-style and adopting the value system of their oppressors.

The destructive nature of this sub-culture manifests itself in the living reality of Black folks' attitudinal and philosophical outlook on life. The self-preserving quality of unity is almost totally absent in the Black community. In its place there is an unhealthy atmosphere of individuality which is detrimental and inconsistent with the needs of our people, for it is precisely this mental and inconsistent with the needs of our people, for it is precisely this thinking that has kept us divided and un-organized for so long.

It would seem that brothers and sisters would recognize the fact that by accepting and perpetuating the values of the class that oppresses us, that they are only aiding in their own genocide. They have all the physical evidence necessary to prove that the values that they now cherish so dearly are not complimentary to their best interests.

In our community we continuously come face to face with the reality of our situation. The dilapidated, fire-hazard tenements; the Black mother with her un-fed child; the brother who overdoses from the CIA's right to free enterprise; the sister that sells herself to an abominable pleasure-seeking fool; the unemployed/unskilled/mis-educated remains of a once beautiful people.

It's sickening to listen to "negroes" talk about how much profit they've made from selling dope and pimping sisters; about the brand-name automobile they're driving, while their children are starving because they have ceased to be men; or to hear some bad-talking, chicken-hearted punk describe how he has ripped off some poor Black's life savings because he does not have the courage to take it from the criminals who oppress us.

We can't afford to continue as we have for the past one hundred years if we expect to ever be in the position to determine the quality of our own lives, and more important, the lives of our children. Already the influence of the negative images projected by some Black folks have filtered down to our offspring. In their attempts to emulate their elders, Black kids are beginning to take on the psychological posture of the street wise. They are being taught (through words and action) that the only way to get ahead in this world is to "get the money" and "go for self". Such values are mere reflections of a potentially destructive sub-culture organized within the social order of a modern technological society. What we must understand is the institutional process that is constantly at work in our daily lives. Only with such an understanding can we begin to make the struggle for liberation a part of our peoples' everyday life, uniting the large objective struggle for liberation with our people's subjective struggle, and make them one continuous movement.

Every institution in this racist class society serves the intended or unintended purpose of maintaining the attitudes, and relationships of our destructive sub-culture. Welfare, housing agencies, systems programs, courts, prisons and countless other ruling class institutions reinforce negative relationships among Blacks. Our relationship and dependence on these enemy institutions is total, and only with their collapse can true alternative institutions prosper, but the process must begin now. We must not only build alternative social, economic, and political institutions, but we must intentionally sabotage, overload, and destroy existing ruling class institutions in the process.

Part of our socialization process is the reality of prison and "crime". Crime in a capitalist society has a class basis, and is punished in accordance with this class basis. The whole of capitalist society is predicated upon exploitive relations, and thus lower class crime is a reflection of ruling class criminal values and practices. In the Black community the average inmate is exposed to, and preyed upon by these very criminal values. We knock each other in the head, rob each other, burglarize each other's apartments, sell dope as a means of "getting over" because we each want what the system of capital has defined as being of value, but has forbidden us to acquire in "legitimate" fashion. In a society that views a persons material things as determining his or her worth, we are the most hungry to be of "worth", crime is essentially illegitimate capitalism in such an arrangement. We are socialized into this distorted existence and can hardly see the root causes that make our community havens for dope sellers, mack men, and hustlers.

The reality of the Black experience in America has not only socialized us into living illegitimate lives (in terms of capitalist law) but it has programmed us to expect and look to the very institutions that created this socialization in the first place, for solutions to our plight. We ask for more police in our community, when it is the police that serve a repressive role in maintaining our oppression. We condone and glorify traitors and snitches, when in the future our very survival will depend on ideals contrary to such vile acts. We ask for stiffer jail sentences for those convicted as "criminals", when it is prisons that help maintain destructive social relations in our community. The fact that all of America is a prison escapes us. This reality has enabled Black folk to adapt so readily to the transition from "street life" to life behind the walls. There is a dialectical and fundamental relationship between the two that reinforces the destructive aspect of Black social relationships.

The weakening of the Black family, the socialization of exploitive male-female relationships, the basic fabric that supports cultural genocide can all be found in the social role that prisons and crime play in a destructive sub-culture. Hardly a Black family, hardly a

Black person is without at least one relative or friend behind prison walls, or know of someone in human cold storage. Our social acceptance of this cold fact is in reality our cultural response to the effect of powerlessness as a people. We must begin to determine our lives by creating community institutions of revolutionary justice outside the structure of capitalist law. This means we must create armed political organs in our community to enforce our community interest, and create new values based on our people's social interest. It will not do to forego this vital aspect of our struggle, we must build it now.

Why is the construction and maintenance of community based armed cadres necessary? Because the enforcement of revolutionary justice in our communities is first a political question that cannot be answered by the existing oppressive system, but outside its control. Secondly, the very nature of corruption, crime in our communities, the negative class role of the courts, prisons, and other related institutions, must be combated with enforcement of our own laws, laws beneficial to our people and our struggle for liberation. Thirdly, if we construct our own agencies of revolutionary justice, arm them and politicize their ranks, we are creating the necessary machinery for survival, while actively repressing those values and elements in our community that prey on our people. Finally, we should realize that until our powerless, poor and unconscious people can call someone else other than the oppressors' storm troopers for protection, we are ineffective as a revolutionary movement.

Complementary to creating our own social force of "law" enforcement is the struggle to take over, dismantle, and weaken the oppressor's police apparatus in our community. This apparatus must be neutralized at the same time that our own apparatus is being built. The two are dialectically opposed to each other, yet there is a complementary aspect. Community control of police, residence of the police in the community in which they work, are all reform issues that tactically are complementary to building our own system of community revolutionary justice. These reform issues should be the continued target of the mass front, while the creation of community-based armed cadres for the enforcement of revolutionary justice is the proper province of clandestine activity.

We maintain that in the social revolution for Black liberation, it is a principled necessity that any creation of a national Black front must first and foremost deal with the social effects of a destructive sub-culture by creating and directing a system of revolutionary justice that will protect and defend our people against reactionary behaviour. This is the social aspect of Black liberation for the immediate future.

Leadership Of The Struggle

It is important that the leadership of our struggle come from among our own people, just as it is crucial that we build the necessary machinery that will develop this leadership. The problem of leadership has always been a vexing one for Black people. We must break with the old style of leadership forced upon us by the prevailing class standards or we will fail in our struggle. Nonetheless, leadership is important, especially to Black people, and without it we will never triumph in our struggle.

It is past time that Black intellectuals, professionals, and so-called Black scholars assumed a more active role in the leadership of the liberation struggle, instead of laying back theorizing and writing essays in a vacuum, or in various Black bourgeois publications.

We realize that many of our Black scholars have their minds in pawn to the ruling class, we are not primarily addressing ourselves to these particular individuals, but to those brothers and sisters who have a relatively high level of awareness (political) and to those Black intellectuals who are anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist, and pro-Black liberation. It is these Black intellectuals who must assume new positions of leadership in our struggle by helping to build the necessary revolutionary apparatus that will forge total liberation.

On the armed front it is these intellectuals who must become the political leadership and work in creating a far-reaching and effective apparatus. Our struggle for Black liberation is a revolutionary struggle, for it implies the transformation of the whole of American society if it is to succeed, and Black intellectuals have a clear obligation to this process. We have seen how the capitalist state uses its intellectuals and institutions of "higher education" in order to continue its exploitive policies, and we as a people must utilize our professionals and intellectuals in the total process of liberation and destruction of capitalistic society. Our principled call for a national Black revolutionary front will never become a reality without such leadership of Black intellectuals with concrete and clear revolutionary politics. The BLA will never subordinate itself to such a front unless leadership of this calibre is evident. Our intellectuals must make a firm commitment to improving the quality of our struggle on all fronts, military, mass front, electoral politics, legal front, etc. For us the creation of a revolutionary front and its military arm are worthy tasks for our intellectuals to pursue in the revolutionary process. There can be no struggle without sacrifice, and our Black intellectuals must begin to apply this principle to themselves as well as other.

It is clear to us that the so-called lumpen class cannot carry our liberation struggle forward on its own. This is because of their class nature: undisciplined, dogmatic, and easily prone to diversion. This class however will supply some of the most dedicated comrads to the struggle. But we must clarify our view of the lumpen class as a whole. The traditional concept of lumpen as a category of the lowest social strata in an industrialized society, unemployed, etc., is a description that fits not only brothers and sisters that hang out in the street all day long and survive in that fashion, but it also fits a great segment of Black people who are marginally employed and who for various socio-economic reasons think essentially the same as the classical "lumpen". Therefore, we must make a clear distinction between the economic definition of lumpen (the relationship of that class to the means of production) and the attitudinal, behavioural definition which can readily apply to a larger proportion of our people. When we use the term lumpen, we are using the broad definition.

The unemployment rate among Black people is a little over twice that of the white population, placing it roughly at 20%. This to us is still a conservative estimate. But if we consider the population ratio of Blacks to whites, such a high rate of unemployment represents a considerable number of total amount of Black people. Therefore, in strictly social terms, the lumpen class represents a very large segment of the Black population, a segment who in our estimation will be the first to grasp the realities of capitalist repression. This as it may be, we still realize the limitations of this class in moving our struggle forward, their class tendencies make them ideal targets of the enemy, as agents, infiltrators, as well as some of these same tendencies contribute to making the lumpen class staunch comrads in struggle. When we realize the real limitations of this class, we as a movement will begin to create a more dynamic revolutionary process.

The Black bourgeoisie (from which most Black intellectuals, professionals, come) cannot by themselves lead our struggle, not because they are incapable of leadership but because their class nature is more reactionary than revolutionary. The tendency to vacillate, compromise with the ruling class enemy, opportunism, and lack of commitment to any revolutionary principles, are typical traits of this class. It is from this class that the enemy has drawn the majority of so-called "endorsed" spokesmen, and it is this class from which the majority of poverty pimps spring forth.

But this class can supply the movement with some dynamic leadership as well as devoted comrads. Those truly progressive elements of the Black bourgeoisie that can be won over to the side of the liberation struggle should be focused on by the movement and principally dealt with. The failure of the liberation movement to put the Black bourgeoisie principally against the wall is inexcusable. For if the people are to understand the impotency of our bourgeoisie, its opportunism, and the role they are made to play in maintaining our collective oppression, the movement as a whole must create conditions that will lead to such an understanding.

We have witnessed the ruling class crisis of Watergate, and the division it has caused within the ruling circles. This division was essentially based on repairing the body politic of capitalist rule. The "crisis of confidence in government" was a crisis for the ruling economic circles, for they had to not only restore "faith" in their system of rule (political system) but they also had to find a political front man upon which they all could agree, and in whom the masses would have some degree of confidence. Yet the revelations of Watergate (which were essentially of a political nature dealing with the ruling class parties) had profound implications for our struggle. It hinted at the extent to which our movement has and is repressed by the reactionary government. An ideal opportunity existed for the movement as a whole to put our so-called "elected leaders" of the Black bourgeoisie against the wall. But the movement never seized the opportunity presented. No consistent widespread call was put to Black politicians to conduct an unilateral investigation into the government repression of the Black liberation struggle, and into political espionage against the Black movement. Such a demand could have revealed glaring repression (and thereby weaken the mental residual belief in our oppressors' "fair" system) or as was more likely, the real impotency of our Black elected officials would have been clearly revealed (thereby weakening the confidence in bourgeois electoral politics to effect change). Of course no such widespread call was made, and therefore no such result. It is this lack of practical class struggle that inhibits the growth of the mass front. The Black bourgeoisie must be put into objective conditions that can benefit our struggle, or enhance the people's awareness as to what they are truly about. Only in this way can those progressive elements within their ranks come to the fore.

The majority of Black people are workers and as such suffer all the exploitation of the working class in a capitalist society. In addition to this, however, black workers suffer the vicious effect of institutionalized racism. Black workers are the lowest paid, the most marginally employed, and the most economically insecure. The impact of technology will further erode the employability of the Black worker, for in the majority of cases the educational background of Black workers are lower than their white counterparts. Education for Blacks has always been another method of programming Black people into the lowest strata of capitalist society insuring generations of exploitable and marginal labor.

We view the Black working class as the basis for the success of our struggle, not because of its political consciousness (which is still very low) and not because of its class nature (more disciplined, industrious), but because of its sheer numbers and because of its economic role in the Black community. We do not think that Black workers' relationship to the productive forces of this society is essentially different from any other class of Blacks due to racism. Although there are some differences there seem to be no essential differences. Black folks in total suffer the same relationship to capitalist productive forces, some more so than others, but all essentially the same.

Just as we have made a distinction between the purely economic definition of the lumpen and the attitudinal definition of the lumpen, we are forced to make a similar distinction between bourgeois attitudes and working class attitudes. All those who must work are workers, but all workers are not of the working class. Such as police and prison guards who serve a reactionary class function, or those that work, yet maintain the upper middle class behavioural patterns and attitudes.

We therefore define the working class (and bourgeoisie) not solely on their economic relationship to the productive forces, but also on how they view themselves and society and behave as a result. Thus the Black bourgeoisie is a sham bourgeoisie, for it has no real economic base (in comparison to white capital) but its attitudes are real and strongly affect their class character. The Black working class has the economic basis of a working class, but many of them have the mentality of the sham bourgeoisie, which affects their social response to certain class ideas. Thus you have a Black family that can barely make ends meet with all the ideas of the Black bourgeoisie, "putting their daughter through school-society", attending "cocktail sips", etc. Nonetheless, we perceive the Black working class as the socio-economic basis of Black liberation. The Black working class, like any other unconscious working class has no revolutionary identity at best, no consciousness of itself as a revolutionary class. To move the enemy is to move the working class, for the enemy is the factor that determines our relationship to each other. This can only be done through active struggle on all fronts, it is the sum total of this process that brings about revolutionary conditions, not the parts in and by themselves.

We can then say that the leadership of the Black liberation struggle will come from the most advanced elements within each class of the Black population, and because of the objective conditions certain classes will gravitate toward particular fronts of struggle more so than others, and it is on these particular fronts of struggle that leadership will be developed, culminating in some form of collective leadership for the entire movement (as conditions dictate such unity for mutual survival). We already see this trend in the movement today. However, the basis of the movement will increasingly depend on the Black working class and its ability to perceive the nature of capitalism, racism, and the politics of these twin evils as they relate to our survival as a people. The primary factor in developing such a consciousness is the enemy, his increasing crisis, and social reaction to his dilemma. Therefore we must increase his problems a thousand fold, while building our capacity to struggle. Yet we do not see the Black bourgeoisie as the primary class leading the masses of black people into a higher degree of revolutionary consciousness. Experience has taught us that the black bourgeoisie as a class has certain ideological tendencies. It is these tendencies if not curbed, that limit the revolutionary potential of this class of blacks. The era of civil rights, has shown us that any thrust of our liberation struggle primarily led by this class will never exceed the bourgeois goals of the class itself. Such being the case, the racist ruling circles have always found it more "acceptable" to concede to Black bourgeois demands and thereby diffuse any revolutionary movement among the masses of Blacks who are not yet conscious of their revolutionary potential. The racist oppressor has a natural ally in the Black bourgeoisie, because this class above all is the most opportunist.

We still hold fast to the premise that the Black bourgeoisie in the U.S. is essentially a colonial type bourgeoisie, that at one moment supports the legitimate aspirations of the "colony" (for its own bourgeois ends) and at other moments opposes these aspirations when their bourgeois leadership position is threatened. The history of the reformist civil rights phase of the Black liberation struggle proves this beyond a doubt. Recognition of these tendencies in this class of Blacks should not deter the revolutionary segment of the movement from requiring of the Black bourgeoisie certain responsibilities, namely, that it is still their duty to build a movement that will lead in the ultimate destruction of the capitalist state and self-determination for only under these conditions will our survival as a people (a free people) manifest itself.

Considering our just given overview of the classes, and class nature of the Black liberation struggle, we contend that if the Black working class is the basis for our struggle succeeding, and that each of the primary categories of the Black population will assume some leadership responsibilities in leading the struggle, the primary category of Blacks that will constitute the dynamic revolutionary leadership of the movement will be the Black students, and youth as well as those young Black adults who have acquired the basics of professional training but have refused to continue in the same narrow vein as their parents. The crucial element in developing this dynamic potential is the training of this segment of the Black population. Our youth, students and young fledgling professionals must be politicized more, involved in struggle, and trained in the art of protracted war. Over half of the Black population is under the age of 30, and we as a movement must realize their true potential. For, if we don't, the enemy surely will, and intensify their programs aimed at dehabilitating our young.

What Is Protracted War In The Black Liberation Struggle?

If the nature of the crisis of the system of oppression is protracted, that is, drawn out over a considerable period of time, then our struggle to defeat this exploitive system and acquire self-determination is also of a protracted nature. But why a protracted war?

The very reality of Black people's experience in North America proves that we are and have been in a state of war. This is a difficult realization for many to make, especially those who still have their minds in pawn to the great American delusion, but often the truth is harsh in its naked form. The nature of this war assumes many different guises, sometimes overtly violent, sometimes economically restrictive, and still other times socially repressive. If we bear in mind that the modern wars of U.S. imperialism waged against Third World people have not all been completely military campaigns, but have also included social pacification programs, economic aid to reactionary regimes, political-police extermination of legitimate opposition and the like, then it should not be too hard for us to realize that in its policies against Blacks, poor people, and other national minorities, the U.S. government is waging an undeclared war. The primary aspects of this undeclared war are class repression, and casualties can be counted on both the welfare-unemployment roles, and the statistics of murdered Black youth and prison-crime reports.

This undeclared war has masked itself as "domestic reform", "law and order", and " a return to traditional American values" a la Nixonian doctrine. The ending of overt U.S. military involvement in Vietnam has led to an increasingly reactionary stance on the part of the majority of white Americans. The vile and deceitful nature of America's institutions were revealed glaringly by the Vietnam imperialist venture, and has cast many into the pit of uncertainty.

Of course the post-Vietnam revelations of government deception told Black people nothing "new" about the ruling class institutions of American society. But it revealed these institution for what they are, for the first time America could see what was perpetrated in their name. This was/is most uncomfortable, for white America cherishes its self-deceptions of righteousness and democracy. With the eroding of these self-delusions, our position as a national minority has become increasingly endangered. There is the foul odour of reactionary "Americanism" in the air, fanned and blown into the confused faces of white America by a ruling class beset with all manner of economic political and social ills - which demand attention. (The landslide victory of Nixon in '72 was an endorsement, conscious or unconscious, of white America's deep-seated reactionary nature and confusion as manifested in the Nixonian doctrine.)

The onslaught of domestic repression, social programs of class repression, and "law and order" are upon us all now. We must build the means to combat these programs of the enemy, or our very survival will be severely in question. So when we say a state of undeclared war exists, we mean a domestic war, an economic, a military, and a political war. We therefore must fight this war on all fronts.

The strategy of protracted war is suited to our objective circumstances. The oppressor is strong while we are weak. But his strength is not absolute, is not without its limitations. These limitations are to be found within his seeming strength. For purely military reasons we will not go into them all, but the immense size and urban centralization of the economic strengths of our oppressor make him vulnerable, his intensified difficulties on the economic and social levels make him tactically vulnerable, the erosion of his reactionary political face make him politically vulnerable, and subject to social dysfunction. In addition, the exploitive relationships of capital are approaching their limitations, while we are progressive and as of yet have not reached our full potential. For these reasons and many others, protracted struggle is a correct strategic line. We must refuse to fight decisive battles on the military level, while striving to increase our potential to harm ruling class interests. We must organize on the mass level along these same principles: refusing to fight battles that cannot be won, while constantly engaging in those that will build the confidence of our people. This does not mean an abdication of responsibility to raise the level of consciousness of our people by engaging in struggles that will only "enlighten" them, it merely means that each tactical struggle around particular issues must have a specific and concrete goal that can be won.

Protracted struggle is the method of struggle that shuns bringing conflict to one decisive showdown. Instead, it seeks to wear down the enemy, force him to utilize all of his manpower without securing a decisive victory, while the revolutionary forces increase their strength and raise peoples' awareness in the oppressor, while these same burdens are the catalyst for the masses organizing themselves. In short, protracted struggle is the process by which the enemy is weakened, demoralized, and made politically bankrupt, until our relationship to his strength is tipped in our objective favour.

We maintain that on the military level, urban guerrilla war, based on the strategic principles of protracted struggle, can succeed in its aim of increasing the crisis of the capitalist system of oppression. And, that urban guerrilla struggle serves as a dialectical and necessary element in the fight for national Black self-determination, without which we will be defeated.

Revolutionary Internationalism And Pan-Africanism

As we have stated earlier, the Black liberation struggle is a revolutionary struggle because it cannot succeed without the total re-alteration of the whole of American capitalist society. In the final analysis, Black national self-determination means destruction of the whole of capitalist relationships. This is the revolutionary aspect of our struggle. But if revolutionary nationalism implies the destruction of capitalism on the national level - it must also be applied internationally. Revolutionary nationalism on the international level is anti-imperialist internationalism. This means that it is impossible to be a real revolutionary nationalist without being at the same time anti-U.S. imperialist.

Imperialism is the final stage of over-developed capitalism. It is the international control of monopoly-corporate capital over the economic, social, and political lives or over half the world's people. Imperialism is also the extension of the capitalist ruling class's political control on the international level, which has called into existence the organization of neo-colonialism, then, is the highest stage of imperialism, for it substitutes the faces of the oppressor while maintaining the exploitive relationship of imperialism. Because imperialism is international in scope, the fight against it must also be international. For until all people affected by it are free, no one will be free. Capitalism must be destroyed wherever it exists and we must mutually support each others' struggles against it.

To relate Pan-Africanism to the realities of the world today, we must never lose sight of the true nature of imperialism and its number one exponent, U.S. imperialism. Pan-Africanism that does not deal with neo-colonialist lackeys, but instead obscures the exploitive policies of these lackeys for the sake of Blackness, is nothing more than bourgeois nationalism taken to the international level. A Pan-Africanism that does not support the struggles of other Third World peoples against reactionary imperialist control, is not true revolutionary internationalism, and hence narrow cultural nationalism on the international level. In order for Pan-Africanism to be truly progressive, it must not only advocate the necessity for Black international unity against racism, it must put racism in its true perspective. It must also advocate Black and Third World unity against imperialism and neo-colonialism everywhere. Which means internal solidarity among national minorities within the confines of the U.S. A Pan-Africanism that does not clarify to Black people the economic basis for all national oppression cannot possibly explain the very fact that there are Black governments that exploit and assist in the oppression of Black people, and therefore will be unable to deal with the dialectics of racism correctly. It is the duty, therefore, of Pan-Africanism, to clarify and explain to Black people exactly who the enemy is. The enemy is international capitalism, imperialism, and neo-colonialism, and all those in league with these reactionary forces on the world scene.

The question of which road against racism and imperialism for the Black liberation movement here in the U.S., is a question that has been kicked around by everyone from doctrinaire narrow Black nationalists to the most reformist minded "Black intellectuals". Although it is not our intention to answer this question in its entirety, it is our intention to make the following points:

> 1. Whatever the ideological differences within the liberation movement here in the U.S., our movement must persuade those countries that are Black and truly anti-imperialist, to take a principled stand on the issue of political fugitives from the shores of the USA.
>
> 2. That the nature of imperialism and racism requires of all those that oppose these twin evils the utmost in mutual support short of actual interference within the national struggle of a particular people.

In respect to point number one, it should be obvious to all elements of the Black liberation movement that things will get worse before they can possibly get better. The crisis of the capitalist system, increased domestic reaction, and other factors indicate that Black people will feel the ramifications of contradictions more so than any other class or group in this country. We can no longer sit by and rationalize the fact of the repressive apparatus of the ruling classes arrayed against our struggle. It would be incorrect for any responsible movement activist not to prepare for eventualities that the struggle for liberation may be confronted with.

We all must consider that any intensification of our struggle will lead to an increase of repression. This should not be feared as the pseudo-revolutionaries would have us do. Instead, we should see any intensification of repression as a necessary result of our increased efforts toward full freedom and prepare for it. Essential to such preparation is the establishment of principles of political sanctuary beyond the shores of the imperialist U.S.

We cannot but note that a real friend does not turn you away from his door in times of danger, and just as those independent and progressive nations of Africa principally support and give sanctuary to the freedom fighters of Africa, it is equally as principled that the movement for Black liberation within the U.S. be supported in a like fashion. Every group, every organization in the struggle for self-determination, should put this request high on the agenda of tasks to be dealt with. Our movement as a whole should make the principled stand that our right to struggle, and the mutual obligation to support all anti-imperialist movements is more than mere rhetoric, and as such we as a movement should be supported on the international level.

The second point deals with the basis for our contention that support is necessary, for without a unity in effort world, wide imperialism will not be defeated, nor racism eradicated.

It is the international web of U.S. imperialism, its profound effect on the lives of the world's people that puts our struggle in such a crucial strategic position. International support should be based on this strategic premise, for if self-determination is a legitimate goal of our struggle it will ultimately become an international question. As a movement we will be unable to create the principled international support necessary if we do not speak as one voice. Thus the principle of a National Front has clear international implications and is conducive in creating a unity in effort on the international level. To create the type of solidarity needed we should emphasize practical approaches. Sanctuary for our movement's activists is a practical approach that can develop into the establishment of a permanent strategic headquarters abroad, out of the immediate reach of the enemy, and able to give strategic guidance to the movement during heightened repression. There are other such practical approaches already in motion.

It is incorrect for those involved in the struggle to attend international conferences without putting the question of practical and principled support of our movement on the agenda, this every organization should at least agree with in principle. In terms of international solidarity, the same principle holds true for other progressive nations that also refuse revolutionary aid offered in the spirit of solidarity. Our principle of self-reliance is not compromised as a result of seeking concrete international support, it is enhanced by its revolutionary nature.

We find it absurd that many brothers and sisters can support the armed struggles in Africa and not support the armed front at home. This is adopting the posture of solidarity with the essential spirit and revolutionary substance. It comes as no surprise than that progressive struggles do not support our movement as they should, how can they when we ourselves do not support our own? In the final analysis true revolutionary internationalism begins at home. It begins with basic principles of revolutionary struggle.

In summation, the Black Liberation Movement must move forward into the international arena with clear revolutionary politics instead of "community-oriented perspective" devoid of broad and far-reaching understanding. Revolutionary nationalism is and must be revolutionary internationalism, Pan-Africanism if it is to be revolutionary must express not only international Black solidarity, but revolutionary solidarity with all oppressed peoples struggle against U.S. imperialism.

Alliance With Whites

We are opposed to unprincipled class collaboration in our struggle for liberation, for unprincipled class collaboration can only weaken and dilute our struggle. On the other hand, we uphold the principle of unity based on struggle around issues that relate to our peoples revolutionary development. The principle of unity on struggle does not remove our right to principled criticism of reactionary ideas and struggle with incorrect views.

The question of Black-white alliances is both a tactical and strategic question of policy, that can only be answered by given objective conditions and not by emotional reflex. Many brothers and sisters think that under no circumstances should we as Black people enter into alliances with whites. These comrads consistently confuse alliance with bourgeois integration, or they maintain that all whites are our enemy, and therefore to have any alliance with whites can only lead to co-optation of our forces. Still other arguments maintain that in Black-white alliances we will be "fronted off" and for whites' own benefit. Some argue these views ideologically, in that they believe that a method, ideological system, if invented by whites cannot be adapted to, modified and developed to serve Black folks. It is a good thing Mao, Ho Chi Minh, Amilcar Cabral, Kim Il Sung and a host of other revolutionaries who led successful struggles did not think with such blinders.

The root cause of such incorrect views of alliances with whites is "fear" and lack of confidence in the forces that we ourselves build. We as a people are not at all used to dealing with white folks from a position of power and we fear that we will be manipulated against our will. Another contributing factor in creating our narrow perspectives if the fact that because we lack a clear understanding of class struggle. Nothing is absolute, including white folks and their alleged unity. To persist in the incorrect view that whites are all embracing in their unity among other whites is a stupid and childish myth that we have as a people. It is a confusion an oppressed people make when confronted with a seemingly all-powerful system of oppression. We have confused the appearance of the system with its substance. In capitalist society class struggle, inter-group antagonism, ethnocentric divisions, are all at the basis of such a system. Competition is the order of the day, and class unity, group unity, are all transitory, subject to change at any given moment. The historical fact that out of such conflict racism has evolved as culturally typical of all white society should not obscure the real differences among whites based on economic, social, and political position. We combat racism with revolutionary nationalism and a Black revolutionary united front, not with reactionary nationalism and racism. We combat economic exploitation with revolutionary class struggle waged against the capitalist class and their flunkies. These are the methods the movement should employ, revolutionary nationalism secures in our own hands our movement for self-determination, and thus combats the historical dynamic of white racism, while revolutionary class struggle allows us to defeat our class oppressor and enter into alliances beneficial to us.

Revolutionary struggle is a process, and like all things, goes through stages of development, setbacks, and periods of dormancy, at one point uniting seemingly contradictory elements, and at another eliminating these elements. The principles of united fronts, principled alliances, are basic recognition of this dialectical process of social change. Alliances based on revolutionary class-consciousness and around our national interests as a people can never be "integration." Integration is a class collaboration of an unprincipled and reactionary nature, for it is based primarily on racial considerations, whereas alliances based on the revolutionary considerations of our struggle must be principled ones, its principle characteristic being our own working class interests as a people.

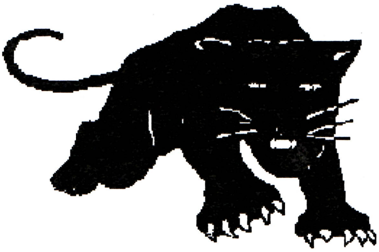
Does this mean Black-white worker solidarity at any cost? Black-white worker solidarity cannot be attained at any cost, but at a particular cost. We do not agree with white leftist revisionists that Black and white workers share the same interests because they are both workers. While this may be true on a tactical level (specific struggles around certain issues), it is not true on a strategic level. Strategically speaking (long range) the Black workers' ultimate goal is the same as the masses of Blacks, which is toward national self-determination as a people, the creation of a socialist state, or Black nation places different requirements on the Black worker - our move is for autonomy - our working class must not exist for any other state but our own. Whereas the white worker has an historical obligation to create his own socialist relationships. The cultural, and social dynamics of racism mandates this distinction if we are not to fall victim to powerlessness in the future when capitalist relations are abolished. National self-determination is therefore a necessary stage for both Blacks and whites in creating new human beings able to relate to each other. Thus Black worker-white worker solidarity can only be a tactical policy not a complete strategy having as its end one socialist entity as the revisionists would have us believe. Recognition of our right to national self-determination is not compromised when we clearly understand our tasks as a movement. Both the establishment of a Black revolutionary Nation based on socialist relations, and overthrowing the present capitalist system and establishment of a predominantly white workers state, are complementary struggles, and as such there will be tactical unity around issues that affect both Black and white workers. This is not integration.

On the armed front, solidarity is based upon revolutionary action. We recognize the legitimacy of all revolutionary violence against the capitalist corporate state, its ruling classes, and its institutions. Militarily speaking, clandestine alliances between different revolutionary armed formations is a matter of coordinating command first. Until such time as the armed front develops its logistical machinery in depth, such coordination of command is unlikely. But for the Black liberation movement, its armed front, and its entire clandestine network, there is no hang-up concerning ideological, or military control of our struggle by whites. Organized armed struggle has freed us of this fear so typical on the mass front. Our formations are Black-led, controlled, and organized to win the fight for liberation.

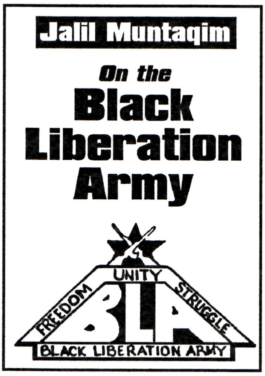
The Black liberation movement must be a principled and revolutionary movement, or it will be unable to lead our struggle for freedom forward to final victory. The question of Black-white alliance is not a question of should we form such alliances, but a question of when and with whom. To consider any tactical alliances that are in our own best interests, and that strengthen our struggles' position as "integrationist", is therefore an incorrect view. To ally oneself with something is not to necessarily bring that thing into you ranks and give it control over your political policy. We refute all ideas that confuse principled revolutionary unity with unprincipled class collaboration.

In closing, it is clear that there is still much to be learned, and our movement will surely encounter difficulties and setbacks in the coming years. We must prepare ourselves, our people, and our ideas for the long and difficult road ahead. Our preparation must be thorough and complete, for our very existence will depend on how well we prepare on all fronts of the struggle. We are in the turbulent years, the hard years. Black people and oppressed people throughout the world are entering the season of struggle.

The Sooner Begun, The Sooner Done!



MORE ON BLACK LIBERATION

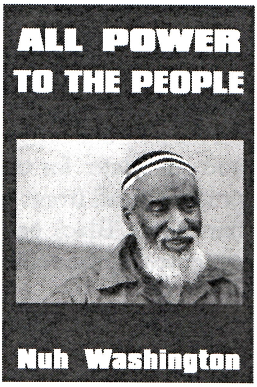


Jalil Muntaqim

On the Black Liberation Army

On the Black Liberation Army

by Jalil Muntaqim (New York Three Black Panther/ BLA political prisoner). Originally written in 1979, this pamphlet is an excellent brief history of the Black Panther Party offshoot, the Black Liberation Army, written by one of its soldiers still locked down since 1971. Published by Solidarity. $3 US / $4.50 Can

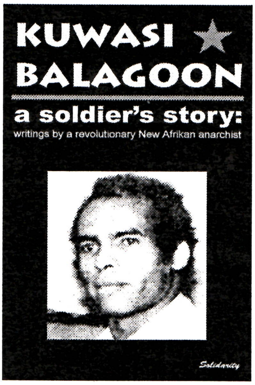


ALL POWER TO THE PEOPLE

Nuh Washington

All Power To The People

Writings by and about now deceased Black Liberation Army soldier Albert Nuh Washington. This is the single largest collection available in print. Includes interviews, essays, poetry, photos, and tributes to Nuh by political prisoners and friends. Published by Arm The Spirit-Solidarity. $10 US / $15 Can



KUWASI ★ BALAGOON

a soldier's story:

writings by a revolutionary New Afrikan anarchist

Solidarity

Kuwasi Balagoon: a Soldier's Story;

writings by a revolutionary New Afrikan anarchist, by fallen Black Liberation Army freedom fighter Kuwasi Balagoon, with contributions by Meg Starr, David Gilbert and Sundiata Acoli. This 120-page book is an incredible collection of writings by Kuwasi Balagoon, an anarchist revolutionary who fought the good fight with the B.L.A. Published by Solidarity. $ 7 US / $10.50 Can

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This statement was originally written in 1975 by the Coordinating Committee of the Black Liberation Army as part of its effort to consolidate the various isolated BLA units. It is political analysis, statement of general political positions, and a contribution to the Black Liberation Movement specifically, and to the revolutionary movement in general. It includes sections titled "View from the Armed Front", "Racism and Class", "Leadership of the Struggle", "What is Protracted War in the Black Liberation Struggle", "Revolutionary Internationalism & Pan-Africanism", and "Alliances With Whites."

"Dedicated to all the comrades killed, captured, and exiled in the struggle to build the armed urban guerrilla front, and to those who supported us when all others refused to face up to reality... The season of struggle is our season."

The Black Liberation Army (BLA), was a clandestine politico-military offshoot of the Black Panther Party. It was formed in direct response to the repression by the U.S. government under COINTELPRO that saw Panther activists jailed, harrassed, and assassinated. The BLA was active throughout the 1970s until defeated militarily in 1981, but the BLA lives on in the many political prisoners still imprisoned.

Arm The Spirit

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ISBN 1-894820-22-3